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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/823,787	04/14/2004	Bradford D. Henry	63288-656	4669

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EXAMINER

TAWFIK, SAMEH

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3721

DATE MAILED: 11/30/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/823,787

Applicant(s)

HENRY ET AL.

Examiner

Sameh H. Tawfik

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 September 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-21 and 23-29 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 29 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 and 23-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Based on an Appeal Conference been held to discuss the filed Appeal Brief filed on 09/21/2006, the prosecution has been re-opened and new ground of rejection has been done as disclosed here-in.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1, 3-21, and 23-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 1, line 2; "an open envelope having a flap" is vague and indefinite as it is not clear as to what applicants mean by "open envelope" is it unsealed envelope while the flap of the envelope folded over the body of the envelope to be considered as "open envelope" or is it the flap is away from the body of the envelope to be considered as "open envelope"?

In claim 1, lines 6 and 7; "the conveyed open envelope relative to widthwise distal end portions of the conveyed open envelope" is vague and indefinite as it is not clear what applicants mean by "widthwise" as in respect to which type and size of envelope. "widthwise" is different?

In claim 21, line 5; "a conveyed envelope" is vague as it is not clear if applicants are referring to the same "conveyed envelope" as claimed in line 2 or is it a different envelope?; etc.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

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A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 3, 9-11, 15-21, and 23 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yates (U.S. Patent No. 5,715,648).

Yates discloses a high-speed envelope transport and packing system comprising: a conveyor for conveying “an open envelope having a flap” (Figs. 3 and 4; via rollers 28 and 30); packing station for inserting an object into the conveyed open envelope (Figs. 3 and 4); and a bending member disposed in the packing station (Figs. 2, 5, and 6; down fingers 60 and 62 and flapper paddles 68 and 70); wherein the bending member is configured to impart a bend in the conveyed open envelope by displacing a center portion of “the conveyed open envelope relative to widthwise distal end portions of the conveyed open envelope” (Figs. 5 and 6; via members 60 and 62 bend by displacing a center portion of the envelope relative to widthwise) and to maintain a bend in a conveyed open envelope until the open envelope is gripped by a gripping device (Figs. 3-6; via by engaging the feeding rollers 150 and 152 and by moving upward the stop 54 could be consider as gripping device; column 2, lines 65-67 and column 3, lines 1-4) in such a manner as to provide access to an interior of the open envelope or until an object is at least partially inserted into an interior of the open envelope (Figs. 3 and 4); and the bending member is configured to bend the open envelope about an axis that is substantially perpendicular to a joint between the flap and the open envelope, see for example (Figs. 1, 2, 5, and 6).

Regarding claim 3: wherein the bending member comprises a rail disposed along a direction of conveyance of the open envelope (Figs. 1 and 2; via the rods/rails of 60 and 62) in a

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position substantially corresponding to a center line of the conveyed open envelope with respect to a widthwise direction of the conveyed open envelope (Figs. 1 and 2).

Regarding claims 9 and 10: wherein a height of the rail is less than about 5.0 mm and/or between about 1.25 mm and 1.75 mm., see for example (Figs. 1 and 2).

Regarding claim 11: wherein the bending member comprises paired rails disposed along a direction of conveyance of the open envelope (Figs. 1 and 2; via the paired rails of 60 and 62).

Regarding claim 15: wherein a height of the rails is less than about 5.0 mm and/or between about 1.25 and 1.75 mm. see for example (Figs. 1 and 2).

Regarding claim 17: wherein the bending member comprises a channel disposed along a direction of conveyance of the open envelope in a position substantially corresponding to a central region of the conveyed open envelope with respect to a widthwise direction of the conveyed open envelope (Figs. 1 and 2; via the space between the two rails/fingers 60 and 62 could be considered as channel).

Regarding claim 18: wherein a width of the channel is greater than about half of a width of the conveyed open envelope with respect to the widthwise direction of the conveyed envelope, see for example (Figs. 1 and 2; via the space between the two rails/fingers 60 and 62 could be considered as channel).

Regarding claim 19: wherein a width of the channel is greater than about three-quarters of a width of the conveyed open envelope with respect to the widthwise direction of the conveyed open envelope (Figs. 1 and 2; via the space between the two rails/fingers 60 and 62 could be considered as channel).

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Regarding claim 20: wherein the bending member comprises paired channels disposed along a direction of conveyance of the open envelope in positions substantially equidistant to a center line of a conveyed open envelope with respect to a widthwise direction of the conveyed open envelope (Figs. 1 and 2; via the distance between 60 and the end edge of 68 could be seen as another channel and the same of the distance between 62 and end edge of 70), and wherein the paired channels are disposed to receive widthwise ends of the conveyed open envelope.

Regarding claim 21: a bending member configured to bend a conveyed envelope about the z-axis during conveyance of the conveyed envelope to increase the moment of inertia of the conveyed envelope about the z-axis above a corresponding moment of inertia of the conveyed envelope in a flat state (Figs. 1, 2, and 6; via moving the flapped envelope in the z-axis).

Regarding claim 23: wherein the bending member comprises at least one of a center rail, a plurality of rails (via rods of fingers 60 and 62), a curved plate (via 68 and 70), a center channel (via the distance between the fingers 60 and 62), and a plurality of channels disposed along at least one side of a conveyed envelope, and wherein the bending member is configured to displace a central portion of the conveyed envelope by less than about 5.0 mm relative to widthwise ends of the conveyed envelope, see for example (Figs. 1, 2, 5, and 6).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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Claims 4-8, 12-14, and 24-28 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yates (U.S. Patent No. 5,715,648) in view of Haas et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,798,040).

Yates does not disclose that a plurality of arranged vacuum ports on the rail. However, Haas discloses similar envelope packing system comprising the use of plurality of vacuum ports (Fig. 7; via 650A-650D).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Yates's bending member by using arranged vacuum means, as suggested by Haas, in order to control the conveying of the envelope.

Regarding claims 5 and 13: Yates discloses that wherein the rail (via rods extending out of 60 and 62) disposed along a direction of conveyance of the open envelope is disposed proximal to a side of the conveyed open envelope having the flap, see for example (Figs. 1 and 2).

Regarding claims 6, 8, and 14: Yates discloses that wherein a front edge of the rail, relative to the direction of conveyance of the open envelope, is chamfered or curved (Figs. 1, 2, and 6; via the bending members 60 and 62 positioned by the front edge of the rail).

Regarding claims 24-28: Yates does not disclose that a vacuum plate provided in the packing station; wherein the vacuum plate is configured to bias an envelope and an envelope flap against the vacuum plate at least during insertion of an insert into the conveyed open envelope. However, Hass, discloses similar envelope packing system comprising a vacuum plate provided in the packing station with plurality of vacuum ports; wherein the vacuum plate is re-movably attached to the packing station and positioned within a central region of the packing station and configured to bias an envelope and an envelope flap against the vacuum plate at least during

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insertion of an insert into the conveyed open envelope (Figs. 1 and 7; via vacuum means 650A-650D).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Yates's insertion station by using a vacuum plate provided in the packing station with plurality of vacuum ports; wherein the vacuum plate is removably attached to the packing station and positioned within a central region of the packing station and configured to bias an envelope and an envelope flap against the vacuum plate at least during insertion of an insert into the conveyed open envelope, as suggested by Haas, in order to control the conveying of the envelope.

Conclusion

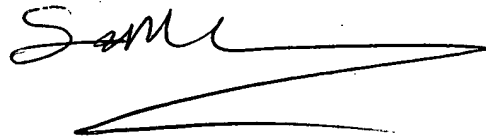
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sameh H. Tawfik whose telephone number is 571-272-4470. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday - Friday from 9:00 AM to 7:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rinaldi Rada can be reached on 571-272-4467. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Sameh H. Tawfik
Primary Examiner
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sameh', followed by a long horizontal line that tapers to a point on the right.

ST.